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Private and public interests in Provo are working together to ensure that development enhances, not destroys, the canyon.

Provo ponders canyon's future

By Kris Radish
Deseret News staff writer

PROVO — Mayor Jim Ferguson believes it's time to get pushy about the things Provo and surrounding cities have to offer.

That's why he is organizing private and public interests to jointly plan the future of Provo Canyon.

"One day I was just thinking about some of the projects the city had planned on doing and it dawned on me that we had a lot of potential here."

"It's almost embarrassing."

Ferguson says the canyon is the key to the future of his city, the county and private interests.

"I go up Provo Canyon a few times a year, but hardly as much as I should," said Ferguson. "When you really think about it the canyon is one of the biggest attractions in the area."

"Sometimes we do things when it's too late," he said. "I don't want to be in that position."

a freeway going right through it."

Ferguson said when he started thinking about the canyon he immediately thought of actor Robert Redford and Sundance resort.

"Mr. Redford has really been misinterpreted by lots of people," said Ferguson. "Many think he is just a strong environmentalist who is really a developer."

While Redford is dedicated to the environment, he is also a developer."

minimizing the impact of development on the environment.

"The people at Sundance have been developing parts of the canyon in a very positive way, so I contacted them," said Ferguson. "The possibilities for public and private groups working together are endless."

He said he met with Sundance representatives two weeks ago, and their reaction was positive.

land owners in the canyon, and virtually everyone is excited about the possibility," Ferguson said. "I didn't even know the county had a master plan for the area."

Ferguson said with all the groups working together the development of the canyon can be orderly.

"There is no reason why the golf course the city has planned for the canyon can't be worked in."

Canyon

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Ferguson. "Projects could be tied together, and the canyon could be a more attractive area."

He said representatives of public and private landowners will be meeting in the next two weeks. He said that meeting will set the tone for the direction the group will take.

"An idea like this will take years to develop, but I would like to be able to drive up the canyon with my grandchildren and enjoy a well developed, beautiful place."

Ferguson said Sundance representatives are working to organize the group, and he sees that as a positive thing.

"Some people might say we are crazy for doing something like this," he said. "But we want the public to know projects like this can work."

He said those involved will try to remain open to any ideas that might enhance the canyon's natural beauty.

planes of the Air Force Reserve's 926th Tactical Fighter Group flew to Utah from New Orleans Naval Air Station, La., for a weeklong maneuver in the western desert.

They and F-16 Air Force fighters and F-105 Thunderchief aircraft of other reserve units combined forces for an "Exercise Cajun Wildcat"

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